

Cal ACS at the East Bay Mini Maker Faire – 22 October 2017

After warming up at last month's Solano Stroll, the California Section was ready to celebrate the 30th anniversary of National Chemistry Week at the East Bay Mini Maker Faire in Oakland on Sunday, October 22nd. In keeping with this year's NCW theme -- "Chemistry Rocks!" -- our booth featured do-it-yourself crystal growing activities, using solutions of borax and Epsom salts, as well as an extensive mineral exhibit, courtesy of College of Alameda chemistry and geology professor Peter Olds. We distributed copies of the NCW 2017 edition of "Celebrating Chemistry" in both English and Spanish, with plenty of information to encourage young chemists (and their parents) who want to learn about minerals and try these hands-on activities at home. Free Periodic Table cards, NCW balloons, NCW stickers, and Nanomoles were popular as well. We conducted an informal survey, "What's Your Favorite Mineral?" and collected around 60 responses (rose quartz was the winner, followed by diamond and emerald), but that represents a small fraction of the hundreds of visitors our booth hosted throughout the day.



Al Verstuyft and Lisha Ou at the East Bay Mini Maker Faire 22 October 2017 © Alex Madonik

"Al Verstuyft and Lisha Ou greet another young chemist."

Our display also highlighted last year's dedication of the National Historic Chemical Landmark at UC Berkeley for the development of the Mars Mariner Infrared Spectrometer, featuring the late George Pimentel, who was later ACS President and the founder of National Chemistry Week.



"The magic of Calcite."



"Rose Quartz was a favorite among our many visitors."

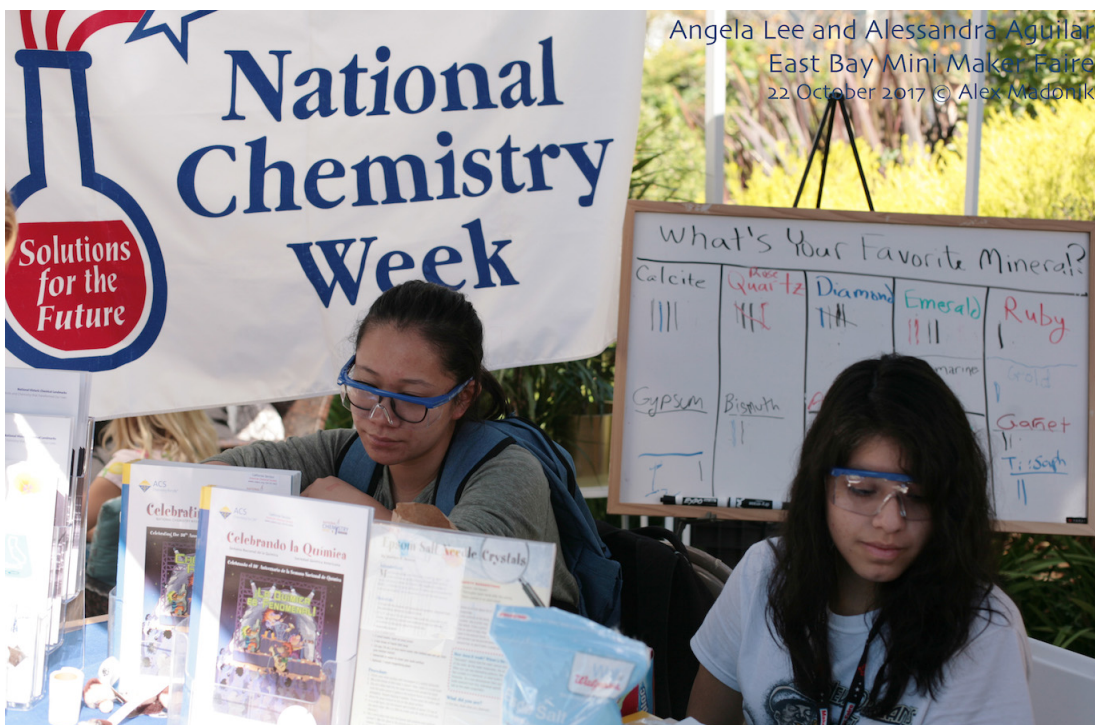
Our volunteers enjoyed interacting with the public, and your NCW coordinator had the pleasure of reconnecting with several teachers who have hosted previous outreach events. I also spoke with representatives of informal science groups in the East Bay and San Francisco that hope to collaborate with the ACS in the future. Let me close by thanking the indispensable Al Verstuyft, who was there shortly after 8:30 AM to help me set up, and Alessandra Aguilar, Chief Master Alchemist Angela Lee, and Lisha Ou of UC Berkeley's Sigma Chapter of Alpha Chi Sigma, who assisted us for much of the afternoon. A perfect day for public outreach! The festivities will continue next Saturday (October 28th) with the Bay Area Science Festival's East Bay Discovery Days in Hayward and North Bay Discovery Days in Santa Rosa; finally, look for us at Discovery Days at AT&T Park on Saturday, November 11th.

Alex Madonik
National Chemistry Week Coordinator

East Bay Mini Maker Faire - 22 October 2017 © Alex Madonik



"Preparing to grow Epsom Salts crystals."



Chief Master Alchemist Angela Lee and Alessandra Aguilar, volunteers from the Sigma Chapter of Alpha Chi Sigma at UC Berkeley.